

Appl. No. 09/730,813
Amendment

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted following the RCE dated June 27, 2003 and refers to the Advisory Action dated June 4, 2003 and the final Office Action dated January 27, 2003. The RCE includes amendments submitted with a Response to Office Action dated May 27, 2003. This Amendment amends the patent application further to the May 27 amendments.

Prior to this Amendment, claims 1, 5-12 and 19 are pending and under consideration. Claims 2, 3 and 13-18 stand withdrawn from consideration. In this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended, and no claims have been cancelled or added. Thus, claims 1, 5-12 and 19 are pending and under consideration.

Applicants invite the Examiner to call Applicants' Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Claim Amendment

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the claim. Claim 1 now calls for "an opening width $W(1)$ of the smallest portion on the plasma nozzles is set in a range satisfying $10 \text{ mm} < W(1) \leq 100 \text{ mm}$."

Fig. 1 shows an example of Applicants' claimed surface treatment apparatus. The surface treatment apparatus 1 has a plasma nozzle 7. The plasma nozzle 7 has an opening width $W(1)$ of the smallest portion on the plasma nozzle 7 which is set in a range satisfying $10 \text{ mm} < W(1) \leq 100 \text{ mm}$. See the specification at page 34, line 5 - page 35, line 22. Applicants' claimed invention provides advantages. For example, hollow glow discharge can be generated efficiently at the plasma nozzle when the plasma nozzle has the claimed opening width.

The Advisory Action asserts that Takahashi et al. teaches a diameter of the pores of the perforated electrode 30 to be in a range of 0.1-10 mm. Applicants respectfully submit that Takahashi et al. does not disclose or suggest Applicants' invention as claimed in claim 1. Applicants further submit that claims 1, 5-12 and 19 are allowable.

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Specification Amendment

The specification has been amended at page 35, lines 17-20 merely to be consistent with amended claim 1. Applicants submit no new matter has been added.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and request a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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